

SEIU Local 140 Newsletter 3.21.24

Take Action!

- Join our executive committee meeting March 23 at noon at 525 NE Oregon St or on [zoom](#).
- Contract ratification celebration on March 25th from 2-5pm at Viking Game Room, PSU, 1825 SW Broadway. [RSVP here!](#)
- Vote for your new union leaders by April 2nd.
- Board meeting April 2 at 6pm to discuss changes to policy regarding military recruiters in PPS
- Next membership meeting April 13 at noon, location TBD

Union Updates

Contract Celebration

We are hosting a celebration for ratifying our new contract on March 25th from 2-5pm at the Viking Game Room at PSU, 1825 SW Broadway. (Note that the location was originally advertised for Kingpins on 92nd, but has been changed to PSU.) It's important to take time to honor our struggles over the past several months in fighting for our rights and for all the actions we have taken together that allowed us to reach this contract. Family, friends, and union siblings are invited. Please RSVP in advance [here](#).

Union Elections

All members should have received a link via their personal email to vote for our new union leadership. Elections for Executive Committee members and General Council delegates occur every two years. Voting is open until April 2 and you can view candidate statements [here](#). If a position has no candidates running, or you do not see the person you want, you are always welcome to write in a candidate. If you have not received an electronic ballot, email Joe Cartino at cartinoj@seiu503.org.

New Stewards!

At our last membership meeting, attendees voted to authorize Curtis Christle and Jennifer Sherman to act as stewards for the union. This volunteer position entails advocating for the rights of fellow workers by acting as a representative during disciplinary meetings and helping file grievances on behalf of members when management violates our contract. Learn more about why Curtis decided to become a steward below:

Over the years. I have thought about the importance of being in a union, and how the system works. Through those years. I have been misunderstood, treated terribly, made fun at, and possibly been discriminated against. I never expected the education system to be the same. Why is that? Whether somebody has a hidden or seen condition, people seem to complain that we are

different. Just because we don't think or know what you expect. Those who do that never seem to compromise to find that middle ground.

Still, there is a lot more that has been brought to my attention. All of the sexual harassment claims, PPS faulting others, and not accepting accountability for their actions. Policies are not being followed. Custodians and nutrition services workers still need to be valued. We are service employees. Management and the district still need a reality check. As a shop steward, I want to point out these essential rights. Others may not want to respect and cherish differences. We still need to be proud individuals who want to work to serve the community. That's all that should matter

Custodial Labor Management Committee Meeting Report

By Jennifer Borley

The labor management committee (LMC) meets several times a year to discuss various issues in the workplace. Currently, Jennifer Borley, Dave Vecsi, and Jim D'Arcy sit on our custodial LMC.

During the LMC meeting on Tuesday, Frank claimed he did not know how the budget cuts would affect custodians. Frank and the FOMs also claim that they are pissed at the garbage company for not regularly emptying dumpsters. Frank talked about wanting us to take pictures to use as evidence so they can get out of the current contract and go to a different company. What good are the yellow sensors if the district and the company are not able to track when the dumpsters don't get emptied?!

LMC members also talked about the toxic environment in some schools. Frank and Roshni want to have a meeting with me and others to talk about what is going on and problem solve on how to make it better. You can reach out to me (jenniferborley79@gmail.com) or any other steward if you want to report or make a complaint about harassment or other unsafe working conditions.

Regarding cleaning and supplies I talked about how in some bathrooms the pee doesn't make it anywhere near a toilet. And how mopping that up with the same mop used on all other bathrooms is gross and just making sure all your bathrooms smell. Frank did say he would look into disposable mop heads for that reason or getting extra mop heads so we can have one just for pee. Frank asked us to talk to our FOMs if we have "an especially bad pee situation."

Frank reported that APPA has conducted its survey of schools and would be sharing a report in 40- 50 days. Our new contract states, "if the report recommends the District increase staffing levels, then the parties will discuss options to adjust staffing."

Local Solidarity

District Cuts to Impact Special Education

The recently announced budget cuts within PPS will affect many departments, but they're set to be especially [significant](#) within the special education department. These cuts will reduce almost 150 special education staff with a variety of different roles. Although many of these positions are technically part of central operations, they are student facing. The budget cuts won't be finalized until May.

Board to Discuss Establishing Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps at PPS

At the April 2 meeting, the school board will discuss revising PPS policy to allow high school principals to establish Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) programs in PPS schools. PAT has already signed a letter opposing the plan. The letter raises concerns that, "as JROTC programs require at least 100 students or 10% of the school population be enrolled in the program, it begs the question how many students would genuinely register for these classes, and how many others would be required to take this program against their wishes." It later goes on to state that, "We can not continue to uphold the school to military pipeline that preys on our most marginalized students."

Anti-war organizations will be in attendance at the meeting to oppose this proposal which is supported by board members Julia Brim-Edwards and [Herman Greene](#) among others. You can learn more about the campaign to oppose JROTC programs at PPS by listening to this recent [KBOO interview](#) with John Grueshow with the War Resisters League.

International Solidarity

Student Walkout for Palestine

Students held a [walkout](#) in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle last Friday, gathering at PEC for a rally with speakers that included youth as well as adults. Their demands directed towards the district were stated as the following: "1. Implement comprehensive education about settler colonialism and Palestine for all grade levels, 2. Release a statement openly condemning the ongoing genocide in Gaza, and 3. Cut all ties with companies complicit in the Israeli occupation." One of the groups behind this action is Students for Justice in Palestine, which has sent a letter to the board and testified at board meetings along with members of PPS Workers for Palestine, a group consisting of various staff members throughout the district who are standing in solidarity with Palestinians. The PPS Board has yet to act on any of the demands presented by activists.

Multnomah County Board Ceasefire Resolution

The Multnomah County Board voted unanimously to approve a [ceasefire](#) resolution that was crafted through negotiations with all board members after an earlier ceasefire resolution failed to pass at the beginning of February. Conditions continue to worsen in Gaza with over 30,000 confirmed dead and many more threatened by the continued military assault on the area, lack of medical care, disease and starvation. The resolution states that social justice is an essential value of the County and that the resolution helps uphold this by protecting human rights and condemning the targeting of civilians. It also acknowledges that the United States has a role in the violence as a longstanding ally of Israel and as the

source of much of its arms. While these resolutions may seem small, many localities passing them have the potential to influence the policies of the Biden administration. At the same time, much more must be done to halt the genocide and ensure self-determination for the Palestinian people.

Rally to Stop the Plunder of the Philippines

On Wednesday, March 6th, over 50 community members held a rally and delivered testimony at the Oregon Investment Council (OIC) meeting to demand that Oregon State Treasury divest PERS (Public Employee Retirement System) funds from corporations responsible for plundering the Philippines. Kalikasan Solidarity Organization (KSO) led the rally which included members of SEIU and PFSP, as well as various environmental justice and national liberation organizations.

KSO is calling on the OIC to divest from Boeing, Tesla, JP Morgan, Oceanagold and Teleperformance. In the Philippines, the operations of these corporations are responsible for the destruction of people's lands and livelihoods. This is backed up with intense militarization by which the US-backed Philippine state attempts to crush any peoples' resistance to corporate plunder.

So far under Marcos Jr, there have been 316 illegal or arbitrary arrests, 87 extrajudicial killings (plus 482 killings in the name of the "war on drugs"), 12 enforced disappearances, and 22,391 aerial bombings. These attacks, and the foreign investments they protect, continue the colonial domination of the Philippines historically entrenched by Spain and the US, and they are at the root of the ongoing armed conflict in the Philippine countryside. The Philippine government's depraved counterinsurgency war against the peoples' just defense of their land, livelihoods, and sovereignty constitute war crimes under the designations of International Humanitarian Law.

After delivering testimony along with hundreds of petition signatures calling for the OIC to divest, community members led a rally outside the Oregon State Treasury. Speakers at the rally encouraged attendees to look towards the resistance in the Philippines and in Palestine as guiding lights, drawing connections between the investments fueling brutal repression in both countries. Speakers highlighted that rampant imperialist plunder is the mechanism driving climate change and human rights abuses, emphasizing the value of international solidarity in our movements.